died, I am afraid, in the ſlighteſt degree; ſhould a more laudable ambition ever gain ground they may be brought nearer to nature and reaſon; and become more virtuous and uſeful as they grow more reſpectable.

But, I will venture to aſſert that their reaſon will never acquire ſufficient ſtrength to enable it to regulate their conduct, whilſt the making an appearance in the world is the firſt wiſh of the majority of mankind. To this weak wiſh the natural affections, and the moſt uſeful virtues are ſacrificed. Girls marry merely to *better themſelves*, to borrow a ſignificant vulgar phraſe, and have ſuch perfect power over their hearts as not to permit themſelves to *fall in love* till a man with a ſuperiour fortune offers. On this ſubject I mean to enlarge in a future chapter; it is only neceſſary to drop a hint at preſent, becauſe women are ſo often degraded by ſuffering the ſelfiſh prudence of age to chill the ardour of youth.

From the ſame ſource flows an opinion that young girls ought to dedicate great part of their time to needle-work; yet, this employment contracts their faculties more than any other that could have been choſen for them, by confining their thoughts to their perſons.

Men

Men order their clothes to be made, and have done with the ſubject; women make their own clothes, neceſſary or ornamental, and are continually talking about them; and their thoughts follow their hands. It is not indeed the making of neceſſaries that weakens the mind; but the frippery of dreſs. For when a woman in the lower rank of life makes her huſband's and children's clothes, ſhe does her duty, this is her part of her buſineſs; but when women work only to dreſs better than they could otherwiſe afford, it is worſe than ſheer loſs of time. To render the poor virtuous they muſt be employed, and women in the middle rank of life, did they not ape the faſhions of the nobility, without catching their eaſe, might employ them, whilſt they themſelves managed their families, inſtructed their children, and exerciſed their own minds. Gardening, experimental philoſophy, and literature, would afford them ſubjects to think of and matter for converſation, that in ſome degree would exerciſe their underſtandings. The converſation of French women, who are not ſo rigidly nailed to their chairs to twiſt lappets, and knot ribbons, is frequently ſuperficial; but, I contend, that it is not half ſo inſipid as that of thoſe Engliſh women whoſe time